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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/643,878	08/20/2003	Kevin T. Foley	2165.0010003	5214
21967	7590	12/01/2005	EXAMINER	
HUNTON & WILLIAMS LLP INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY DEPARTMENT 1900 K STREET, N.W. SUITE 1200 WASHINGTON, DC 20006-1109			DAVIS, DANIEL J	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		3733		
DATE MAILED: 12/01/2005				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/643,878	FOLEY ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	D. Jacob Davis	3733	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 September 2005.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-11 and 21-26 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 21-26 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 8-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter, which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. The main body and the contact surface are circular or cylindrical in shape and do not form a plane.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-4 and 7-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,339,915 to Caspar et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,676,666 to Oxland et al. Casper discloses a bone fixation system in figure 2 comprising a plate 29 having openings, the

openings having a length and width. Casper further discloses a drill guide comprising first and second guide members each having a passage, offset portions and a contact surface pointed to by lead line 8. A plane may be formed between a portion of the main body and including a portion of the contact surface.

Casper fails to disclose that the openings having a length longer than the width. Oxland teaches in column 4, lines 17-20 that elongated slots "allow the physician more latitude in placing the screws..." It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to make the Casper holes elongated to "allow the physician more latitude in placing the screws."

Casper fails to disclose recesses adjacent the top surface of the plate. Oxland teaches such recesses, preventing the fastener head from extending outside of the surface of the plate. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include recesses within the Casper plate openings preventing the fastener heads from extending beyond the plate surface and potentially extending into tissue.

Casper fails to disclose the spaced distance between the fastener and the slot as described in claim 11. Nevertheless, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to make the spaced distance 1 mm or more, since it has been held that discovering an optimum value of a result effective variable involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Boesch*, 617 F.2d 272, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980).

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Casper in view of Oxland as applied above, and in further view of U.S. Publication 2002/0065517 to Paul. Casper

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fails to disclose a longitudinal notch. Paul teaches in figure 1 a longitudinal notch overlapping the openings to permit a cover to prevent fastener back out. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include a groove overlapping the openings enabling a cover positioned within the groove to prevent fastener back out.

The Casper device fails to disclose a ridged sidewall. Oxland teaches ridges 84 and 86 in the sidewall of the guide to "engage with the detent" thereby "allow[ing] the depth of the guide cylinders 80, 82 to be readily selected" (column 3, lines 20-24). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include ridges in on the Casper guide to control the depth of the guide.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed September 13, 2005 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to D. Jacob Davis whose telephone number is (571) 272-4693. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo C. Robert can be reached on (571) 272-4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

DJD



EDUARDO C. ROBERT
PRIMARY EXAMINER